

Meeting Notes: March 15, 2005

**Walla Walla River Watershed Chlorinated Pesticides and PCBs TMDL  
Advisory Group Meeting  
March 15, 2005, 6:00pm to 8:00 pm  
Whitman College Hall of Science, Room 151, Walla Walla, WA.**

Attendees:

Bob Bower, Walla Walla Basin Watershed Council  
Terry Bruegman, Columbia County Conservation District  
Don Butcher, Oregon Dept. of Environmental Quality  
Bob Carson, Whitman Geology  
Jean Dolling, landowner  
Stuart Durfee, Gardena Farms Irrigation District  
Elena Escalante, Walla Walla County Watershed Planning Department  
Greg Farrens, Walla Walla Community College  
Mark Grandstaff, WDFW  
Larry Hooker, USDA – NRCS  
Bob Hutchens, landowner  
Judith Johnson, Kooskooskie Commons  
Rick Jones, Walla Walla County Conservation District  
Frank Nicholson, City of Walla Walla  
Bill Putnam, City of College Place  
Yancey Reser, landowner  
Linda Sutor, landowner  
Jesse Swartz, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation  
John Warriner, Walla Walla Watershed Alliance

Agenda items for the meeting were as follows:

- Review of February's meeting notes
- Review of the draft submittal report
- Scheduling information for next meeting

Welcome and review of previous meeting's notes:

Donovan Gray and Karin Baldwin from Ecology introduced themselves and welcomed all attendees to the second advisory group meeting for the chlorinated pesticides and PCB TMDL. The notes for the previous advisory group meeting on the 8<sup>th</sup> of February were reviewed and unanimously accepted by the attendees.

Review of the draft submittal report:

Karin Baldwin apologized for mistakenly mailing an old version of the draft submittal report to advisory group members instead of the most recent version. She then introduced the subject of discussion for the evening, namely the chlorinated pesticide and PCB draft submittal report. Donovan Gray led the review of the draft submittal report. He stressed that the draft document before the attendees was not intended for public review, but was rather a starting point from which to develop the final document. He also acknowledged

that the document contained numerous spelling, grammatical and format errors, and requested that attendees focus their comments on the content of the text. Elena Escalante wanted it noted that although she personally had indicated that Ecology could draw from the Walla Walla Watershed Plan in the completion of the submittal report, the issue had not been formally approved by the planning unit in the form of a vote. She suggested that the text of the submittal report be changed to reflect this fact.

The advisory group then proceeded to review the draft submittal report by section and had the following recommendations:

### ***Introduction***

- 1. Due to uncertainty amongst some attendees, Karin Baldwin clarified the meaning of ‘technology-based controls’ and ‘BMPs’ in conjunction with point and non-point sources as mentioned in the text. Ecology committed to explaining the meaning of this terminology in the text.
- 2. Attendees suggested that the Introduction did not clearly reflect the fact that the Walla Walla basin stretches across Washington and Oregon state jurisdictional boundaries and recommended textual changes accordingly.

### ***Background***

- 3. Attendees recommended naming *all* Washington tributaries in the Walla Walla basin in the text especially Birch Creek.
- 4. Mill Creek was not labeled in Figure 1 and due to its importance attendees felt that it should be represented in the figure.
- 5. Some attendees felt it necessary to add a statement that while some of the basin’s headwaters are in Oregon state, some load allocations are still given in this TMDL for monitoring locations downstream on the Washington side of the border.
- 6. Jean Dolling stated that toxaphene was used at one time to control flies in feedlots located along Pine Creek. She suggested that some reference be made in the text that these may be potential sources of elevated toxaphene levels found in this creek during Ecology’s 2002-2003 TMDL evaluation.
- 7. Frank Nicholson stated that flow from Mill Creek is diverted into Yellowhawk and Garrison creeks all year round and *not* only from May to October as indicated in the text. Furthermore he suggested that this diversion point is not right below the City of Walla Walla’s waterworks as the text appears to imply but it is in fact roughly *14 miles below* the waterworks.
- 8. Various changes and/or additions were suggested for the paragraph on land uses in the Walla Walla basin. These included the need to mention that roughly 25% of croplands are under CRP (Conservation Reserve Protection), the presence of potato and corn crops in the basin need to be mentioned, pasture makes up roughly a quarter of irrigated lands in the Walla Walla, a correction that alfalfa is not a grain crop, and finally that the grape growing industry, specifically for wine production, has seen an upsurge in recent years and is now an important agricultural activity in the area.

- 9. Attendees noted that ‘Wallula’ as it appears in the paragraph on geology was missing a second ‘l’. Attendees also felt a need to include a reference to the marked alkalinity of soils in the Walla Walla area and that this may increase the soil binding properties of chlorinated pesticides and PCBs.
- 10. Attendees suggested that the references to ‘rain and snow’ be removed and replaced with the word ‘precipitation’ from the climate paragraph. The misspelling of ‘EES’ (Economic and Engineering Services Inc.) in several places was noted. It was also recommended that some reference be made in the text to the fact that temperature extremes in excess of those averages listed do occur in the area on occasion.

#### ***Ecology’s Chlorinated Pesticide and PCB Study***

- 11. Attendees suggested that the final sentence of the first paragraph be reworded to explain more clearly why toxaphene is not on the 303(d) list but is still considered impaired.
- 12. It was recommended that the weblink in paragraph two be replaced with a reference to a document for the reason that website addresses change and the weblink may not be valid in future.
- 13. It was felt that clarification was needed on what ‘upper river’ and ‘lower river’ fish are, specifically a reference to what geographical cutoff point was chosen and why it was selected.
- 14. Attendees recommended the submittal report list all fish species sampled in the TMDL evaluation.
- 15. The paragraph on the historical application of pesticides in the basin states that ‘the erosion of fine sediments is a serious problem in the lower Walla Walla basin’. Attendees recommended either changing the wording of the sentence (specifically dropping the word ‘serious’) or using a direct quote.
- 16. Attendees were concerned that studies conducted in the 1960s on suspended solids referenced at the end of the second last paragraph were outdated. They recommended either citing a more recent study showing current trends or make it clear that the study is being referenced specifically to show *historical* suspended sediment conditions.
- 17. It was suggested that a sentence be included in this section mentioning that Garrison and Yellowhawk creeks pass through largely urban environments and that stormwater runoff and not agricultural runoff may be the more significant source of toxins in these water bodies.

In addition to these group recommendations Bob Hutchens had some personal comments and suggestions that he relayed to Karin Baldwin at conclusion of the meeting. These are mentioned here as it is felt that other attendees may have had similar concerns even though these were not addressed during the meeting. Bob Hutchens was concerned that the Technical Analysis section of the submittal report contained references to scientific terminology and methods that were perhaps not intelligible to non-professionals. He specifically recommended the following changes: that ‘mg/liter of total suspended solids’ be represented in their English unit equivalents for those not familiar with the metric

system, and that the concepts of the 'harmonic mean' and the '90<sup>th</sup> percentile' referred to in the text be explained clearly.

Further document review and advisory group comment arrangements:

Karin Baldwin addressed the attendees and suggested that based on the progress of the document review thus far it would not be possible to complete the review in further monthly advisory group meetings and still allow Ecology to meet the EPA submittal deadline in June 2005. She recommended an alternative approach: that of having attendees review the draft document on an individual basis and forward further comments and/or suggestions to Donovan Gray or Karin Baldwin no later than March 30, 2005. Donovan Gray and Karin Baldwin agreed to forward a revised draft document, including all applicable recommended changes, to advisory group members no later than April 11, 2005. Attendees agreed to the above arrangements.

Next Meeting Date, Time and Place:

The next meeting will be held on Monday, April 18<sup>th</sup> 2005 and will last from 5pm to 7pm. Attendees suggested that the present venue in the Whitman College Hall of Science building was a suitable location for the next meeting. However, Donovan Gray and Karin Baldwin chose to make arrangements to hold the next meeting at the Dept. of Transportation Conference Center in Walla Walla because of logistical considerations.